

**SUMMER COMMENCEMENT
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
ST. JOHN ARENA
SEPTEMBER 1, 1994
DICK McFERNON**

PRESIDENT GEE, MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, FACULTY, STAFF, FAMILIES AND GRADUATES -- WHENEVER I'VE BEEN IN THIS ARENA, I'VE FOUND THERE ARE TWO WORDS YOU CAN'T GO WRONG SAYING: GO BUCKS!

WHEN GREAT OHIO STATE ATHLETES PERFORM HERE, THEY GET CHEERLEADERS AND FANS ROOTING THEM ON.

TODAY, YOU GRADUATES ARE CENTER COURT . . . AND YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY MEMBERS ARE UP IN THE STANDS. THEY'RE HERE TO CHEER YOU ON TODAY.

I'M HONORED TO BE ONE OF THE PEOPLE WHO GETS TO CONGRATULATE YOU ON ACHIEVING A MAJOR MILESTONE IN YOUR LIFE: GRADUATING WITH A BACHELOR'S, MASTER'S OR DOCTORAL DEGREE FROM ONE OF THE FINEST UNIVERSITIES IN AMERICA.

YOU'VE REACHED THIS MILESTONE BECAUSE YOU SET A GOAL FOR YOURSELF . . . AND NOW YOU'VE ACHIEVED IT.

AS YOU KNOW, GOALS AND CHALLENGES ARE IMPORTANT. KEEP THEM UP. CONSTANTLY PUT NEW CHALLENGES IN YOUR LIFE. REMEMBER: KNOWLEDGE IS POWER!

WE HAVE A PROGRAM AT NATIONWIDE INSURANCE -- CALLED SOAR -- THAT REWARDS PEOPLE WHO GO THE EXTRA MILE.

SOAR IS A VERY POWERFUL WORD. IT MEANS RISING ABOVE, FLYING HIGH. NOT BEING CONTENT TO FOLLOW THE PACK.

AT NATIONWIDE, SOAR STANDS FOR "SERVICE OVER AND ABOVE REQUIREMENTS." THIS MORNING, I'D LIKE TO TALK ABOUT SOME OTHER WORDS THAT STAND FOR SOAR:

- SUCCESS,**
- OTHERS,**
- ANCHORS AND**
- RESPONSIBILITY.**

FIRST, LET ME START WITH "SUCCESS."

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO DEFINE SUCCESS. TOO OFTEN, THE "GREED IS GOOD" PHILOSOPHY IS CONSIDERED OKAY . . . AND WE DECIDE SOMEONE IS SUCCESSFUL BASED ON THEIR SALARY OR STATUS.

MY DAD USED TO TELL ME, "IF A JOB IS WORTH DOING, IT IS WORTH DOING WELL." DOING A JOB WELL IS A GREAT WAY TO MEASURE SUCCESS. AN HONEST JOB IS ALWAYS ACCEPTABLE.

MANY OF YOU, WHEN YOU CHOSE A MAJOR . . . HOPED TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THAT FIELD. HOWEVER, IN A FEW YEARS YOU MAY END UP IN A CAREER THAT'S VERY DIFFERENT FROM YOUR CURRENT PLANS.

THAT WAS THE CASE WITH ME. AFTER WORKING 10 YEARS, I DECIDED TO GO BACK FOR A MASTER'S DEGREE IN MANAGEMENT.

NO EDUCATION IS EVER WASTED . . . AND THERE IS ALWAYS MORE TO LEARN. WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS THAT YOU ARE AT PEACE WITH YOURSELF AND YOUR WORK.

WHATEVER YOU END UP DOING -- WHETHER IT'S WORKING IN THE ARTS, SCIENCES, SOCIAL SERVICES, EDUCATION, OR BUSINESS -- STRIVE TO DO YOUR VERY BEST TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

AS YOU WORK YOUR WAY INTO YOUR CHOSEN FIELD OF ENDEAVOR . . . SEEK OUT THE DIFFICULT OPPORTUNITIES TO PROVE YOURSELF. DON'T FORGET TO PAY ATTENTION TO THE DETAILS. OFTEN OUT OF SMALL THINGS COMES GREAT SUCCESS.

AS YOU WORK TOWARD SUCCESS . . . REMEMBER, "NO ONE CAN WHISTLE A SYMPHONY. IT TAKES AN ENTIRE ORCHESTRA TO PLAY IT."

SAID ANOTHER WAY, REAL SUCCESS USUALLY COMES FROM WORKING WITH OTHER PEOPLE. THAT BRINGS ME TO THE "O" IN SOAR -- "OTHERS."

LOOKING AROUND THIS ARENA, I SEE THE FACES OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE SUPPORTED YOU -- EMOTIONALLY, AND FINANCIALLY.

TODAY IS ALSO THEIR DAY TO CELEBRATE AS MUCH AS IT IS YOURS . . . IF FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN THEY HAVE NO MORE FINALS WEEKS TO PUT UP WITH OR TUITIONS TO PAY!

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN TO HELP OTHERS . . . AS YOU HAVE BEEN HELPED. GIVE BACK TO THOSE WHO HAVE GIVEN TO YOU. AND AS YOU LEARN, TEACH OTHERS.

IT'S MORE THAN GRATITUDE. IT'S A MARK OF CHARACTER.

HOW YOU WORK WITH OTHERS SAYS SOMETHING ABOUT THE KIND OF PERSON YOU ARE. THE GOLDEN RULE MAY BE FAMILIAR, BUT THE POWER OF TREATING OTHERS AS YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE TREATED IS OVERWHELMING.

AS YOU STRIVE TO ACHIEVE GOALS, FOCUS ON MORE THAN YOURSELF. REMEMBER, PEOPLE WRAPPED UP ENTIRELY IN THEMSELVES MAKE SMALL PACKAGES.

LEARN TO BE A GOOD COMMUNICATOR AND A GOOD LISTENER. THESE ARE VERY IMPORTANT SKILLS.

LOOK FOR WAYS TO BE OF SERVICE TO OTHERS IN THE COMMUNITY. IT WILL GIVE YOU PERSPECTIVE . . . AND YOU WILL FEEL GOOD DOING IT.

YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS ARE OFTEN REFLECTED IN THE THIRD ELEMENT THAT'S NEEDED TO SOAR -- AND THOSE ARE "ANCHORS."

IT MAY SOUND CONTRADICTIONARY AT FIRST, BUT ONCE YOU'VE GROUNDED YOURSELF WITH CERTAIN VALUES . . . IT GIVES YOU TREMENDOUS FREEDOM TO PURSUE YOUR DREAMS.

IN MY LIFE ARE THREE PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT ANCHORS: MY RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, MY ETHICAL STANDARDS, AND MY FAMILY.

SOME PEOPLE THINK RELIGIOUS AND ETHICAL BELIEFS ARE SOMETHING YOU SHOULD TRY TO GET AROUND. I ABSOLUTELY DON'T BUY THAT THINKING.

I'VE FOUND THAT A PERSONAL CODE OF ETHICS PROVIDES CLARITY. PEOPLE KNOW WHAT YOU STAND FOR . . . AND IF YOU'RE CONSISTENT, THEY COME TO RESPECT AND TRUST YOU.

TO ME, A FAMILY IS THE ULTIMATE ANCHOR. MY WIFE, 7 CHILDREN AND 16 GRANDCHILDREN ARE SO VERY IMPORTANT TO ME.

I'M GRATEFUL THAT MY WIFE AND I SHARE A COMMON SET OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS. IT SURE MAKES LIFE A LOT EASIER.

FAMILIES COME IN ALL SHAPES AND SIZES. WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS THE LOVE AND SUPPORT THEY PROVIDE.

I HOPE YOUR FAMILY BRINGS YOU THE SAME PEACE AND JOY THAT I'VE FOUND. THEY CERTAINLY PROVIDE A FOUNDATION TO BUILD UPON IN AN EVER-CHANGING WORLD.

FIND YOUR OWN ANCHORS. THEY'LL HELP YOU TO SOAR.

SUCCESS, OTHERS AND ANCHORS. THAT BRINGS ME TO THE "R" IN SOAR . . . WHICH STANDS FOR "RESPONSIBILITY."

WHILE YOU'VE BEEN IN SCHOOL . . .
YOU'VE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR MID-TERMS AND
FINALS, PARKING ONLY IN "C" LOTS, AND
FINISHING UP THOSE "INCOMPLETES."

NOW YOU FACE ADDITIONAL
RESPONSIBILITIES, LIKE EXPANDING YOUR
WARDROBE BEYOND BLUE JEANS . . . AND PAYING
OFF YOUR STUDENT LOANS.

STRIVE TO AVOID FURTHER DEBT, BECAUSE
LONG TERM . . . IT COULD INHIBIT YOUR
FLEXIBILITY AND YOUR FUTURE OPTIONS.

THE BEST ADVICE I CAN GIVE YOU ABOUT
WORK -- REGARDLESS OF YOUR CHOSEN FIELD --
IS TO SHOW UP, BE ON TIME, AND BE DRESSED TO
PLAY!

IT SOUNDS SIMPLE, BUT IT WORKS!

THE MORE RESPONSIBILITIES YOU CAN
HANDLE, THE MORE YOU'LL BE GIVEN. WITH
RESPONSIBILITY COMES AUTHORITY.

SUCCESS, OTHERS, ANCHORS AND RESPONSIBILITY -- SOAR. THESE ARE THE WORDS THAT HAVE HELPED ME PERSONALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY.

FIND YOUR OWN WORDS. FIND YOUR OWN WAY TO SOAR.

I OPENED MY REMARKS BY SAYING "GO BUCKS."

LET ME ALSO SAY, GO FAR, GRADUATES! DREAM BIG! WORK HARD! ACCOMPLISH GREAT THINGS! AND HAVE FUN DOING IT.

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR SPECIAL DAY!

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CS/JG